

WEST DES MOINES PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT
222-3444

MENS FLAG FOOTBALL RULES

A. General Playing Rules

1. All games will be played in accordance to Iowa H.S.A.A. Football Rules with the exception of any rules specifically stated in these rules or on the team schedules as pertaining to local situations.
2. Seven (7) players on the field at a time (can play with 6).
3. Side-hiking or hiking between the centers legs will be allowed. Contact can not be initiated with center until he is standing erect. Ball must remain on the ground until the ball is hiked.
4. Playing field will be 45 yards long X approx. 45 yards wide (sideline to yard line numbers). Back of offensive end zone will be the 50 yard line. First down is made by crossing either the 40 or the 20 yard line.
5. Offensive team must have at least three (3) players on the line of scrimmage.
6. Multiple passes behind the line of scrimmage are allowed. Once a player crosses line of scrimmage, he becomes a runner and is no longer eligible to return back behind line of scrimmage and throw a pass.
7. No player is allowed to play on more than one team within the same league in West Des Moines during the same season. Violation will result in individual suspension and/or game or match forfeiture.
8. Awards - Team trophies will be presented to the first and second place teams in the league. A team plaque will be awarded to League Tourney Champions (if applicable). League Champions t-shirts will be awarded to every rostered player on League Championship teams.
9. Tie-Breaker - In the event of identical league records, head-to-head competition will be used to determine the winner. If the teams split the head-to-head games, the team with the lowest points scored against them in the head to head games shall be declared the winner. If tie remains, the team with the lowest points scored against them throughout the season will be declared winner.
10. All players are eligible to receive a pass.
11. Each team will be responsible for supplying one player to move the down marker during their scheduled game. The visiting team will move the markers the first half and the home team will move markers in second half.

B. Game Times

1. Playing time for games will consist of **two, 20 minute halves**. Last two minutes of second half only, regulation time will be in effect - clock will stop on incomplete passes, out-of-bounds, etc. (Change of possession in last 2 minutes, clock will start on snap.)
2. Each team will be allowed two time outs per half - non accumulative and 1 minute in length.
3. **GAME TIME IS FORFEIT TIME.** If your team forfeits a game without notifying the Recreation Office 24 hours before game time you will need to pay \$20 before you will be allowed to play your next game. The second forfeit will cost \$40. More than two forfeits in one season or if entire team "no shows" without notifying the Recreation Office will result in immediate release from the league with no refund of fees. Forfeit fees are to be paid to your Score keeper or Parks & Rec Office prior to your next game. Please call opposing team if you know before game that you will be forfeiting. ***All forfeit fees collected will be donated to WDM Human Services.***
4. Forfeited score will be 7-0.

C. Start of Game

1. Coin flip will determine kicking/receiving team. No choice of goal or deferment to choice in the 2nd half.
2. Receiving team will get possession of the ball on the 40 yard line.

D. Scoring

1. Touchdown - Six (6) points
2. Extra Point (pass or run) - Two (2) points (from 10 yard line)
One (1) point (from 3 yard line)
3. Safety - Two (2) points
A safety will be awarded if offense is downed behind the 45 yard line. Ball will then be placed on the 40 yard line after change of possession.
4. Mercy Rule - If either team is trailing by 25 points or more in the 2nd half, the clock will not stop except for time outs. If deficit drops to less than 25 points, revert back to regular stop clock rules.

E. Blocking

1. Both feet must be on the ground on all blocks.
2. Absolutely no down field blocking or screening allowed past the line of scrimmage. Players may run behind ball carrier beyond the line of scrimmage ONLY in order to receive a pitch.
3. Hands may be extended when blocking but hands must remain open and within the width of the shoulders below the neck. Illegal block to the head will result in 15 yard penalty. No blocking below the waist and above the shoulders.

F. Ball is Dead.....

1. on all fumbles, the ball will be declared "dead" where it hits the ground (Ball may not be fumbled forward. A forward fumble will be spotted at the spot where the ball left the carrier's hand. If the ball carrier is inbounds, the clock remains alive).
2. when the snap from center hits the ground.
3. when a flag is removed from a player's belt. Defender, upon pulling flag, should raise flag into the air. Ball will then be placed where forward progress of the ball is when the flag was pulled (not where the runner is/defender is).
4. when a ball carrier guards his flag, five (5) yard penalty with loss of down - immediate whistle!
5. when a ball carrier runs out of bounds.
6. when a ball carrier hurdles over an opponent instead of running around or dives forward leaving his feet. A player not carrying the ball may jump over another player to avoid injury to the player on the ground. Spinning and jumping sideways to avoid a defender is legal.
7. if crosses end zone on a punt whether it was touched by a player or not.
8. if an inadvertent whistle is blown by referee.
9. where and when a punted ball hits the ground. It can not be returned.

G. Punting Game

1. On 4th down, Offensive team must declare intention to kick within 20 seconds.
2. Defense is not allowed to attempt to block a punt in any way. Can not rush punter, jump up to block or stand on backs of teammates. It is a free kick.
3. No fakes will be allowed. If offense declares a kick, it must kick.
4. Team has 10 seconds from the snap to get the kick away.
5. No player may cross the scrimmage line before the ball has been kicked.
6. Defense must have a minimum of four people on the line until the ball is kicked.
7. Absolutely no down field blocking on any kick.
8. Ball is dead where and when it hits the ground. It can not be returned.
9. Ball is dead if crosses end zone on a punt whether it was touched by a player or not. **Punt cannot be returned from out of the end zone.**

H. Pass Plays

1. Receivers must have one foot in bounds for a complete pass.
2. Defender may not check or bump offensive player.
3. Defensive Pass Interference: 15 yard penalty and automatic 1st down. (Exception - if interference occurs in the end zone by the defense within the defenses 30 yard line, ball is spotted half the distance to the goal.
4. Offensive pass interference: Loss of down and fifteen (15) yard penalty from line-of-scrimmage.
5. **Intercepted passes in the end zone cannot be returned.**

I. Equipment

1. All players are required to have the same colored shirts with numbers permanently screened on the back before the first game of the season. If colors are the same as opponent, visiting team members must wear mesh jerseys supplied by the Department. These shirts must be of adequate length and completely tucked into pants.
2. Teams/players must supply their own belts & flags. Two (2) Velcro or Ball-In-Socket flags which attach at the hips must be at least 2" wide and min. of 16" long (and straight). All team flags must be the same color. All players must have all flags attached to belt prior to start of any play. Penalty – Delay of game
3. No elbow, hand, knee or forearm pads are allowed. Receiver gloves will be allowed. No Casts allowed. Exception - Medical braces that are properly padded, covered and approved by referees prior to game.
4. No metal cleats allowed. No metal tipped or hard plastic screw-in cleats allowed. We highly recommend molded plastic or pliable rubber cleats.
5. Teams must supply their own football. Any football - Jr. High, High School, College, Pro - are all approved.
6. Player shorts or pants can never be the same color as the flags.
7. Ball caps are not allowed on the field of play.
8. Jewelry is not allowed on the field of play.

J. Penalties

1. **Five (5) Yards -**
 - a. Off sides (defensive off sides occurs regardless of whether contact made with offensive player).
 - b. Guarding the flag or stiff arm (immediate whistle with loss of down). **If runner elbows a defender who is going after their flags, it should be a 15 yard unnecessary roughness penalty.**
 - c. Ball Carriers Hurdling or diving forward (immediate whistle with loss of down).
 - d. Too many men on the field.
 - e. Illegal line up (3 players required on the line of scrimmage for the offense; defense needs no players on scrimmage line except for kicks).
 - f. More than 30 seconds between plays - too much time.
 - g. Offensive Delay of game (clock will not stop) & Defensive Delay of game (The clock will stop and does not restart until the ensuing snap in last 2 min. of game).
2. **Ten (10) Yards -**
 - a. Holding, tripping or clipping. Bumping or checking a receiver will be considered holding.
 - b. Charging (ball carrier tries to run over defender instead of avoiding - also loss of down). Offensively or defensively.
 - c. Illegal block (non-flagrant).
 - d. Tackling (grabbing the runner - then going for the flag).
3. **Fifteen (15) Yards -**
 - a. Any flagrant penalty - unnecessary roughness, unsportsmanlike conduct, taunting, tackling quarterbacks arm, crack back blocks, etc.
 - b. Any flagrant penalty can result in an ejection from the game. Ejection from a game will result in an automatic one (1) or more game suspension (Recreation Supervisor's discretion will determine suspension of more than one game and this decision will be final).

K. Miscellaneous

1. Overtime: Each team will get 1 series of plays from the 10 yard line. Interception ends the try; the team intercepting can not score with the intercepted pass. The team with the highest total score after a series will be declared a winner. In case of a tie the process repeats. (3 overtime series maximum.).
2. If a player loses his flag:
 - a.) on a running play it will revert to one (1) hand touch; (if receiver has flags when he catches ball but then loses it as a runner, then 1 handed touch)
 - b.) on a pass play, the catch will count but the ball will be blown dead immediately.
3. Any flagrant tackle or hold which would prevent a runner/receiver from scoring - will be ruled an automatic touchdown.
4. Teams are allowed up to 5 roster changes prior to deadline listed on bottom of League schedule.
5. Weekly Scores and Standings will be posted weekly at City website at www.wdm.iowa.gov. Go to Parks & Recreation & then Adult Sports Info.
6. Roster Protest. If a team or the Department has a question about a players eligibility, the following procedures must be followed:
 - a. Player in question must be **CLEARLY** protested before the game ends.
 - b. Notify the Referee, Site Supervisor and the opposing team manager.
 - c. Player must produce legal picture I.D. to site supervisor & must sign & print name on the score sheet.
 - d. No I.D. --- No Play. If I.D. and score sheet match, Game will resume.
 - e. Score sheet will be turned into Recreation Office. If name does not appear on roster, if they use another name or if signatures do not match, the team will forfeit the game (and pay all appropriate fees) and all other games in which the player in question participated.
 - f. No fee for Roster Protest.
7. Game Protest.
 - a. All protests must be **CLEARLY** stated to the Referee, the opposing team manager and the Scorekeeper, at the time of the alleged infraction and prior to the game resuming.
 - b. If no decision can be reached in (1) above, the protesting team must submit a written protest to the Parks and Recreation Office within 24 (working) hours of the scheduled start time of the protested game. All protests must be accompanied by a \$20 protest fee which will be fully refunded if the protest is upheld. Protests will be decided on by a Protest Committee consisting of a Referee not doing this game, Recreation Supervisor and one of the following three (Player Representative, Recreation Coordinator or Department Staff.)
 - c. Protests will be accepted regarding rule interpretations only. **JUDGEMENT CALLS ARE NOT OPEN TO PROTEST.**
 - d. Protests will be considered only when the play in question had a "Significant Effect" on the outcome of the game.

L. Valley Stadium Rules

1. No outside FOOD, BEVERAGES, COOLERS AND WATER JUGS ALLOWED INSIDE FACILITY.
2. Only rostered players allowed on field. Fans must sit in East Bleachers. Teams are responsible for picking up own trash following each game.
3. When front gates are locked or school district activity is still in progress, admittance within the Facility is restricted.
4. No pets allowed.
5. No sunflower seeds or gum allowed in Stadium..
6. Teams must see that all litter they create must be disposed of in trash receptacles after each game.
7. No glass bottles of any kind allowed in Facility.

M. League Tournament

1. A League Tournament will be held only for leagues who did not receive 7 league games due to low or high registration in their specific league. Not every League will have a League Tournament. A large majority of money budgeted for awards will go toward League 1st and 2nd place finishers and a small plaque will go to League Tourney winners. Please do not over emphasize the importance of League Tourneys. Scheduling some leagues with Tourneys allows the Department flexibility to accept the proper levels of teams in the appropriate leagues without being handcuffed to a certain # of teams in each league.

N. Rules of Conduct

1. Each manager will be held responsible for the conduct of his team players and is responsible to see that all rules are observed. The manager must maintain complete control of him/herself and his team members at all times; this includes before, during or after a game and any other time involved with the Flag Football program. The key to a successful program is in the hands of the manager and, in turn, his/her players. Good leadership will ensure a good program.
2. Officials/ Parks & Rec. Staff and their decisions will be respected and not interfered with at any time. Unsportsmanlike conduct, disrespect, vulgarity, or profanity will not be tolerated at any time. Any manager or player removed from a game will receive an automatic one (1) game suspension to be served in the next consecutive game. A longer suspension may be given by the Recreation Supervisor, depending on the severity of the offense. Any player or manager that is ejected from a game must leave the field and Stadium area.
3. A game will be forfeited in the event a team fails to respect the officials authority or decisions; one warning will be given prior to such action. If a team receives a forfeit win or a forfeit loss, this will count as a game played. A report will be submitted to the Recreation Supervisor whose disposal of the matter is final.
4. In any discussion on the playing field with an official, only the manager (one person) will be permitted to enter the discussion.
 - A. Unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated.
 - B. Threatening of an official or supervisor will have an automatic removal for the season. Personal harassment of officials (referees, score keepers, supervisors, directors) may be cause for either the team or individual to be suspended from league play. A player does not have to be in the game for this rule to be in effect. He could be a spectator of a team. Teams are responsible for their own spectators.
5. Any manager or player that is involved in a fight or making physical contact with an official, staff or another player shall be suspended from **ALL** West Des Moines Parks and Recreation Department Adult Sports Leagues for one (1) calendar year.